

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
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AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
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AMEMBASSY PARIS
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USINT BAGHDAD
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CINCEUR FOR POLAD, TEL AVIV FOR PAO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: UNOFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT OF MIDDLE EAST EXCERPTS
FROM SECRETARY'S PRESS CONFERENCE

NEW DELHI FOR NEWSOM PARTY

1. FOLLOWING IS UNOFFICIAL REPEAT UNOFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT OF
EXCERPTS ON MIDDLE EAST FROM SECRETARY'S PRESS CONFERENCE
IN DEPARTMENT TODAY. OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT WILL BE COMING
ON WIRELESS FILE.

2. Q. THE WASHINGTON POST HAS PUBLISHED AN APPEAL BY THE
AMERICAN-LEBANESE LEAGUE WHICH PROTESTS THE SYRIAN ARMY'S
KILLING OF 60,000 LEBANESE MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN, THE
WOUNDING OF 200,000 MORE AND THE DESTRUCTION OF 131
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TOWNS AS WELL AS PUBLISHED NEWS DESPATCHES DETAILING THE
PROTESTS OF PRESIDENT SARKIS AND FORMER PRESIDENT CHAMOUN.
COULD YOU EXPLAIN WHY THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAS REPEATEDLY
URGED THE ISRAELIS TO EVACUATE SOUTHERN LEBANON WHILE
THERE HAS BEEN A VIRTUAL SILENCE, COMPARATIVELY SPEAKING,
ABOUT THE ASKING OF THE SYRIANS TO EVACUATE.

A. THIS IS A QUESTION WHICH RELATES TO THE SOVEREIGN
RIGHTS OF LEBANON. THE LEBANESE HAVE NOT TO MY KNOWLEDGE

REQUESTED THAT THE SYRIANS SHOULD LEAVE LEBANON AT THIS
TIME. THAT IS A SOVEREIGN DECISION WHICH THEY AND ONLY
THEY CAN AND SHOULD MAKE. WHAT WE MUST CONCENTRATE ON
NOW -- ALL OF US -- IS TO SEE THAT THE CEASEFIRE HOLDS
AND THEN TO MOVE ON PAST THAT, TO SEE WHAT CAN BE DONE
TO TRY AND BRING STABILITY INTO THE SITUATION IN
LEBANON. ONE WAY THAT THIS COULD BE DONE WOULD BE TO
REDUCE THE NUMBER OF ARMS THAT ARE PRESENT IN THE AREA
AND TO ENSURE THAT THE STRENGTH AND THE ABILITY OF THE
LEBANESE GOVERNMENT TO CARRY OUT ITS MANDATE AS THE
GOVERNMENT OF THAT COUNTRY BE SUPPORTED. WE DO SUPPORT,
FULLY AND WHOLEHEARTEDLY, THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY,

THE NATIONAL UNITY AND THE INDEPENDENCE OF LEBANON.

Q. IN LIGHT OF THE RECENT INCIDENTS IN LEBANON, DO YOU STILL VIEW THE SYRIAN ROLE IN LEBANON AS A PEACEKEEPING FORCE?

A. I THINK THIS IS A DECISION AS I SAID BEFORE THAT IS UP TO THE LEBANESE TO MAKE. PRESIDENT SARKIS AND HIS GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE THE ONES THAT SHOULD MAKE THIS DECISION. THEY HAVE NOT INDICATED THAT THEY WISH THE SYRIANS TO LEAVE AND I THINK IT WOULD BE WRONG AND AN INTERFERENCE BY US TO BECOME INVOLVED IN SUCH A DISCUSSION.

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Q. WHEN YOU GO TO LONDON AND MEET WITH THE EGYPTIAN AND ISRAELI FOREIGN MINISTERS, YOU WILL BE IN A SITUATION WHERE BOTH SIDES HAVE NOW PUBLICLY REJECTED THE OTHER'S KNOWN PROPOSALS FOR THE WEST BANK AND GAZA. WHAT DO YOU EXPECT TO COME OF THIS MEETING AND SPECIFICALLY WILL YOU BE AT THAT MEETING TRYING TO PROPOSE COMPROMISES?

A. WE NOW HAVE A SITUATION IN WHICH BOTH ISRAEL AND EGYPT HAVE PUT PROPOSALS WITH RESPECT TO HOW TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEMS OF THE WEST BANK AND GAZA ON THE TABLE. IN ADDITION, AS ALL OF YOU KNOW, OVER A CONSIDERABLE PERIOD OF TIME THE PARTIES HAVE BEEN WORKING TO SEE WHETHER AGREEMENT COULD BE REACHED ON A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES WHICH WOULD SET A FRAMEWORK FOR BROADER NEGOTIATIONS. SO, THEREFORE, ALL THREE OF THESE DOCUMENTS WILL BE ON THE TABLE WHEN WE GO TO LONDON. THE PROPOSALS ON BOTH SIDES HAVE DEFICIENCIES. ON THE OTHER HAND, THEY HAVE POSITIVE ELEMENTS AS WE HAVE INDICATED, AND WHICH I AFFIRM TODAY. WE BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD BUILD ON THESE POSITIVE ELEMENTS. WE BELIEVE FURTHER THAT THERE IS ADDITIONAL COMMON GROUND WHICH CAN BE FOUND. THERE WILL BE CLEARLY SHARP DIFFERENCES ON OTHER ISSUES, AND WHAT WE SHOULD SEEK IN OUR MEETINGS

IN LONDON TO DO IS TO IDENTIFY WAYS OF FINDING HOW WE MIGHT NARROW THE DIFFERENCES THAT EXIST BETWEEN THE PARTIES IN THESE OTHER AREAS. NOW, THE ONLY WAY THAT THIS CAN BE DONE IS TO GET THE PARTIES FACE TO FACE IN DIRECT DISCUSSIONS WITH EACH OTHER, SO THAT THEY CAN PROBE EACH OTHER; SO THEY CAN ASK EACH OTHER WHAT DOES THIS MEAN, WHAT LIES BEHIND THIS QUESTION, WHAT FOLLOWS FROM THIS. I THINK THAT OUT OF THAT KIND OF A DIALOGUE THERE IS A HOPE FOR SOME PROGRESS. I THINK
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ITS GOING TO BE DIFFICULT AND I DON'T WANT TO UNDER-ESTIMATE THE DIFFICULTIES. I THINK HOWEVER WE CAN MAKE A START IN WHAT TAKES PLACE AT LONDON AND HOPEFULLY A PROCESS CAN BE RENEWED UNDER WHICH THE PARTIES WILL BE ABLE TO MEET FACE TO FACE ON A CONTINUING BASIS TO TRY AND WORK OUT THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THEM. WE WILL TRY AND ACT AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN THEM. AND TO HELP THEM TO FIND A WAY OF SURMOUNTING THE OBSTACLES THAT STAND IN THEIR WAY.

Q. IN YOUR ANSWER TO A PREVIOUS QUESTION ON LEBANON, YOU SAID THAT ONE OF THE WAYS OF BRINGING STABILITY IS THE REDUCTION OF THE NUMBER OF ARMS IN THE AREA. WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY NUMBER OF ARMS? DO YOU MEAN IN THE LEBANESE MILITIA?

A. I THINK THAT THIS IS A MATTER THAT SHOULD BE DETERMINED BY THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT. THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY. THEY SHOULD DETERMINE WHAT WAYS IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO REDUCE THE GENERAL NUMBER OF ARMS IN THE AREA AND THEN THEY SHOULD SEE WHETHER STEPS CAN BE AGREED TO AND IMPLEMENTED WHICH WOULD PERMIT THIS TO BE DONE.

Q. HAVE YOU YET FORMULATED A CONTINGENCY PEACE PLAN FOR THE MIDEAST AND WHAT EXTENT OF WITHDRAWAL FROM THE TERRITORIES DO YOU ENVISION BY ISRAEL?

A. THE EXTENT OF WITHDRAWAL IS ONE WHICH MUST BE WORKED OUT IN NEGOTIATIONS. THE BASIS OF THE NEGOTIATIONS IS RESOLUTION 242. RESOLUTION 242 SAYS THERE MUST BE WITHDRAWAL FROM THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. IT DOES NOT HOWEVER SPECIFY WHAT THE BOUNDARIES WOULD BE. THAT IS SOMETHING THAT HAS TO BE NEGOTIATED BETWEEN AND AMONG THE PARTIES.

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Q. DOES THE UNITED STATES HAVE A PREFERENCE AS TO THE DEGREE OF ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL?

A. WE BELIEVE THAT RESOLUTION 242 CLEARLY APPLIES TO THE WEST BANK AND GAZA. THIS HAS BEEN OUR POSITION ALL ALONG. AND WE THINK THERE IS NO QUESTION ABOUT THAT.

Q. WHAT ABOUT EAST JERUSALEM?

A. THAT IS A QUESTION THAT HAS TO BE NEGOTIATED AMONG THE PARTIES.

Q. DO YOU YET HAVE A CONTINGENCY PEACE PLAN FORMULATED?

A. WE WANT TO SIT WITH THE PARTIES AND SEE IF THE PARTIES CAN REACH AGREEMENT AMONG THEMSELVES. THAT IS THE WAY IT SHOULD BE DONE. WE HAVE ALWAYS INDICATED, HOWEVER, THAT IF THEY COME TO A STALEMATE WE WOULD BE PREPARED TO MAKE SUGGESTIONS OURSELVES TO HELP BREAK THE STALEMATE. WHAT IS IMPORTANT NOW IS THAT WE GET THE PARTIES SITTING DOWN TOGETHER AND TALKING TO EACH OTHER AS THEY WILL IN LONDON. HOPEFULLY OUT OF THAT WE CAN MOVE TOWARDS AGREEMENT.

Q. IS THE GENEVA CONFERENCE STILL THE AIM OF THE UNITED STATES EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST?

A. THE OBJECTIVE OF THE UNITED STATES IS TO GET THE PARTIES BACK TOGETHER TALKING NOW. WE ARE GETTING THEM BACK TOGETHER AT LONDON. WE HAVE SAID THAT WE WOULD WISH TO SEE THOSE NEGOTIATIONS BROADENED IN THE FUTURE.
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THAT IS THE REASON THAT ONE OF THE ELEMENTS OF THE MATTERS TO BE DISCUSSED AT LONDON IS THE FORMULATION OF A SET OF PRINCIPLES THAT COULD GOVERN A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN. OUR DISCUSSIONS ARE AIMED TOWARDS ACHIEVING A COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTION OF THE MIDDLE EAST. WE HAVE ALWAYS SAID WE BELIEVE IF THERE IS TO BE A FINAL AND LASTING PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST, IT MUST BE A COMPREHENSIVE ONE. VANCE

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